PUTTING ON A GAME FACE

TAMPA BAY'S STEVEN STAMKOS IS TRYING TO MAKE THE BEST OF A LONG, LONG LOCKOUT PAGE 14

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LONDON metro®

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

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Food trucks on a roll?

Street eats. Several restaurateurs working behind the scenes on calls for roving eateries, city says

ANGELA MULLINS
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Name a big city in Canada or the U.S., and it's a pretty safe bet they've got 'em.

A food-truck craze has been sweeping North America for more than a year. Now, a handful of London foodies are trying to stake their claim on the market — and city streets.

The Fire Roasted Coffee Co. is leading the charge, having pitched a proposal to city politicians on Monday night. Others are rallying around the effort, telling city staff they're on board and ready to swing into action, said Orest Katolyk, manager of bylaw enforcement.

"The neat thing is that these aren't the franchise food trucks that have shown some interest," Katolyk said, noting most of the interest has come within the last month. "It's very homegrown, it's very local."

Before the trucks can hit the street, Katolyk and others at city hall need to develop a system for licensing the roving eateries and rules outlining where they can set up shop.

If the idea wins support from city council, administrators want to have a plan in place to allow for curbside cooking next spring.

One of the challenges, Katolyk said, would be to give trucks enough leeway to cover downtown and other spots while making sure they don't park on the doorsteps of traditional restaurants. The city would meet with business owners and borrow from other cities where food trucks have been a success — such as Hamilton — when writing its rules.

"We're not going to try to reinvent the wheel," Katolyk said.

As for the folks at Fire Roasted Coffee, they're happy to lead the way on something that some say could give the Forest City a whole new look and feel.

"London is poised right now to start really enjoying some (of) the benefits of being a larger city," said Matt Thompson, accounts manager at Fire Roasted. "I want to live in a city that enjoys a diversity of cultures."

Keep on truckin'

- The Fire Roasted Coffee Co. is on the second floor of the Western Fair Farmers Market (900 King St.).
- The company roasts and sells coffee beans from around the world, specializing in organic and fair-trade products.
- Fire Roasted's food truck would serve coffee, espresso, chocolates and possibly other edibles.

"London is poised right now to start really enjoying some the benefits of being a larger city," says Matt Thompson, accounts manager at the Fire Roasted Coffee Co. (900 King St.). The company is leading the charge to establish guidelines that would let food trucks start roving city streets. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Playing your card right

Underage drinkers, take note: New ID cards coming on Jan. 1 highlight the date you turn 19 PAGE 2

Child care crunch

Wondering where to park the kids when the teachers walk out on Thursday? Find out about city day camps PAGE 3

System crash

A series of institutional failures allowed serial killer Robert Pickton to prey on his victims, a long-awaited inquiry says PAGE 4

Eat, drink and be moderate

Don't throw your fitness and diet routine out the window. Our tips will help you get through the holidays without busting your belt PAGE 9

NEWS 1

Season of giving

Fa la la la la, we need your blood

The holidays are a tough time of year for blood banks. Regular donors are out of town or busy, making it difficult for the Canadian Blood Services to meet its needs.

The London blood-donor clinic (840 Commissioners Rd E) needs 180 more residents to book appointments. Donors are particularly important over the holidays because platelets in blood donations, required by patients with diseases like cancer, only have a shelf life of five days, so it's impossible to stock-up ahead of time.

For more information visit blood.ca or call 1-888-2-DONATE.

AMANDA GRANT/FOR METRO

Deadly volume

Police warn drivers after cruiser crash

London police are asking people to keep the volume of their car radios at a "reasonable" level after a driver failed to hear a cruiser's sirens Sunday and merged into its path. The officer, who was responding to a call, swerved to miss the vehicle, hitting a Trafalgar Street utility wire and causing minor damage.

Failure to yield to emergency vehicles is punishable by a $490 fine. METRO

Impaired driving

OPP crackdown nets two arrests

Two people are facing charges as Middlesex County OPP target impaired and aggressive drivers. Jeffry Smith, 44, of London, was charged Sunday with impaired driving after failing a roadside test on Highway 401. Rene Groulx, 52, of Thames Centre, was charged Saturday night at a RIDE checkpoint at Elgin Road and Mossley Drive. METRO

Middlesex Centre

Alarm thwarts theft: OPP

Middlesex County OPP say a would-be thief was scared away Sunday by a security system. The suspect tried to break into a Lamont Drive home in Middlesex Centre, but left when an alarm sounded, police said. Nothing was stolen.

Anyone with information is asked to call 519-661-5670 or Crime Stoppers at 800-222-TIPS. METRO

Honest Lawyer bartender Justin Warne, 22, of London, pours a draft Monday at the downtown London bar. New Ontario driver's licence and identification cards showing the date a person turns 19 could help save time and make mistakes practically impossible when dealing with college-age crowds, Warne said. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Bars relieved of birthday math

Simplifying solution. New Ontario driver's licences, identification cards to make date person turns 19 crystal clear

ANGELA MULLINS
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It seems pretty simple, really.

You give your driver's licence to a bartender or bouncer and they do some easy math to figure out if you're old enough to have a beer.

But when you add in music, a crowd and a full evening of pouring drinks, easy math can become challenging, some say.

"You're in a rush, and you have to look at it and (calculate) the months, and the days and the years," said Justin Warne, a bartender at Honest Lawyer. "It gets annoying."

The Ontario government is trying to clear up any fuzzy math that may be lingering at bars and retailers that sell tobacco or alcohol.

Effective Jan. 1, driver's licences and identification cards issued to people younger than 19 will display the date when the cardholder reaches legal drinking age. The information — reading "Age 19" followed by a date — will be at the bottom of cards next to the date of birth.

On this sample driver's licence, the person's date of legal drinking age is highlighted. This will appear on driver's licences issued after Jan. 1 to people under 19. CONTRIBUTED

Officials are calling the change part of the Liberal government's plan "to keep families safe and healthy, at home and on the road."

Driver's licences in all other Canadian provinces, except Quebec, already show the date people turn 19, according to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

The new program comes with a one-time cost of less than $5,000 and is considered a safeguard. It's supported by groups like the anti-tobacco Not to Kids Coalition and Mothers Against Drunk Driving, according to the ministry.

People younger than 19 with government-issued identification won't need to replace it with the new cards after Jan. 1, but can pay to have it updated.

While the new cards may be a bit redundant and may not be the best answer to curbing underage drinking, every little bit helps, some said.

"It couldn't hurt," said John Scott-Pearse, owner of downtown's Robinson Hall and The John Scott (formerly Rouge).

Young drivers

150,000

Approximate number of Ontario driver's licences issued each year to people younger than 19 years old.
Source: Ministry of Transportation

Walkout. One-day camps help parents prepare for teachers' strike

With Thames Valley District School Board teachers scheduled to participate in a one-day walkout Thursday, some parents are struggling to find care for their children.

Both the city and independent groups have stepped up, offering a day camp during school hours.

Children ages four through 12 can attend the city's one-day camp at two locations: Stronach arena and Earl Nichols arena. The camp costs $21 and runs from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Early bird care starting at 7:30 a.m. and after hours programming until 5:30 p.m. is available for an additional cost.

Budding Artists, an arts-based program, will be holding a one-day camp for students ages five through 12, Thursday from 8:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. The program will be run out of the Bruce Pavilion Building at 801 Commissioners Rd. E., behind Parkwood Hospital and for $45 includes a pizza lunch, hiking outings, holiday crafts and sing-a-longs. "I understand that teachers need to go on strike for their rights, but it's too bad that it affects the kids," said Kim Stark, organizer of the Budding Artists one-day camp. "With programming like this it will be just like a PA day, the kids are going to have a lot of fun."

Dalton McGuinty THE CANADIAN PRESS

The walkouts are in protest of a controversial law that allows the province to stop strikes, freeze wages and cut benefits.

Premier Dalton McGuinty has said the government would allow the one-day strikes as long as they don't extend beyond that. AMANDA GRANT/FOR METRO WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Where to register

To register for the City of London day camp, visit london.ca/spectrum or call 519-661-5575. To register for the Budding Artists camp, call 519-639-4588.

On the road. Driver three times over limit, police say

Police in St. Thomas say a 47-year-old man blew three times over the legal limit while driving around with his 11- and nine-year-old daughters.

It happened early Sunday night at Talbot and Fairview when a vehicle rear-ended another car stopped at a red light. Instead of getting out to speak with the driver whose car was struck, the driver in the other vehicle took off. Police eventually caught up with a 47-year-old suspect a short time later and placed him under arrest.

The suspect later blew three times over the legal limit, police said, adding that he's been charged with impaired operation of a motor vehicle, as well as failing to remain at the scene of an accident.

The man's name is not being released in order to protect the identity of his two daughters, however, police say Family & Children Services has been notified. No one was injured. AM980/AM980.CA

Local students mostly unshaken by Newtown shooting, officials say

Thames Valley. School board takes active approach to dealing with traumatic event

AMANDA GRANT
london@metronews.ca

The Thames Valley District School Board was ready for the worst Monday, putting a team trained to deal with traumatic events on standby in case students were upset by Friday's mass shooting in Connecticut.

All in all, officials said students seemed to be coping well with the news.

"This did not happen to the children directly, so it was simply news," said Sally Christensen, a school board psychologist. "Come Monday morning, they were looking forward to their routines and the holidays."

The board issued a statement Saturday suggesting ways parents may address the incident with their children.

Main points included reducing exposure to news reports, answering questions honestly and making kids feel safe.

"You have to let the children lead," Christensen said.

"If they have questions or are upset, they will come to you. We want to respond to what they need, not to what we think they need."

Director of Education Bill Tucker sent a letter to principals requesting that school flags be flown at half-staff. The letter also touched on safety in the district and how to address concerned parents.

"Seeing the scope and senselessness of the events in Connecticut, it is natural that students and parents may have questions about school safety here in Thames Valley," Tucker wrote.

"From our partnerships with area police departments, to video surveillance systems, mental health supports for students and the constant, watchful eye of a caring staff, I feel confident that we have made great strides over the years to make our schools as safe as possible."

On the web

Sally Christensen, a psychologist with the Thames Valley District School Board, has prepared a guide for talking to kids about the mass shooting in Connecticut. The tips are posted under "news" at tvdsb.ca.

Quoted

"You have to let the children lead. If they have questions or are upset, they will come to you. We want to respond to what they need, not to what we think they need."

Sally Christensen, a school board psychologist

The flag at H.B. Beal Secondary School flies at half-mast Monday as a tribute to those killed Friday at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. AMANDA GRANT/FOR METRO

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Students embrace while wearing Newtown school sweaters outside the funeral for six-year-old shooting victim Jack Pinto in Newtown, Conn., Monday. Friday's shooting has brought the gun control debate in the U.S. to a boiling point. CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Students mourn slain classmates

Connecticut shooting. Gunman's motive still unknown, but investigators believe he attended Sandy Hook

The Connecticut town shattered by last week's school massacre held its first two funerals Monday, as officials weren't sure whether the school itself would ever reopen. Nervous students and teachers across the U.S. returned to classrooms under tighter security.

Family, friends and townspeople streamed out of two funeral homes after saying goodbye to Jack Pinto, who loved the New York Giants football team, and Noah Pozner, who liked to figure out how things worked mechanically. Friends and loved ones headed for two cemeteries afterward.

In front of the funeral home where relatives were mourning Noah, well-wishers placed two teddy bears, a bouquet of white flowers and a single red rose at the base of a maple tree. Hymns rang out from inside the funeral home where Jack's service was being held. "The message was: You're secure now. The worst is over," one mourner, Gwendolyn Glover, said.

The boys were being buried a day after the small community of Newtown came together for a vigil where U.S. President Barack Obama said he will use "whatever power" he has to prevent similar massacres.

"What choice do we have?" he said. "Are we really prepared to say that we're powerless in the face of such carnage, that the politics are too hard?"

Investigators have offered no motive for the shooting, and the Connecticut community is struggling to comprehend what drove 20-year-old Adam Lanza to shoot to death his mother at home in bed Friday morning, drive her car to the school and unleash gunfire on six adults and 20 children.

Obama has given no specifics on what he might do, and White House spokesman Jay Carney on Monday warned that "no single piece of legislation or action will fully address the problem."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Coping with fear

"I don't want to see my kids go to schools that become maximum-security fortresses. That's not the world I want to live in, and that's not the world I want to raise them in." Noah Pozner mourner Ray DiStephan

BoC. Carney's summer vacation didn't break conflict rules, bank says

Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

The Bank of Canada tried to quell questions about its governor's impartiality and judgment Monday, saying Mark Carney was not afoul of conflict rules by vacationing in the summer at the cottage of the Liberal finance critic.

The central bank confirmed a weekend report that Carney stayed at Scott Brison's Nova Scotia cottage while key members of the Liberal party were courting him for the leadership.

Spokesman Jeremy Harrison said there was nothing improper in the visit, and that bank duties were not discussed.

"The Bank of Canada's general counsel, who is responsible for enforcing the bank's conflict of interest policy, has assessed that this visit does not breach the bank's conflict of interest guidelines in any way," Harrison said. "Neither the Bank of Canada, nor governor Carney, have an actual or potential commercial or business relationship with Mr. Brison."

Harrison added that Carney and Brison had been friends for about a decade and that the visit to the MP's cottage at Cheverie, N.S., cannot "be defined as partisan or political activity."

Brison confirmed the friendship, which began in 2004 when Carney was an associate deputy finance minister and the MP was the Liberal public works minister, but refused to elaborate about the visit.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Public consultation

CRTC wants input on 911 service

The CRTC is asking Canadians for ideas on how to improve the 911 emergency service in light of changing technology.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is looking at how 911 services are impacted by the telecommunications system's evolution to next-generation networks based on Internet Protocol.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Discount travel

Air Canada sets launch date for new carrier

Air Canada plans to launch its new low-cost airline Tuesday in Toronto. The company gave few details but promised more information would be released at the event.

The unnamed discount carrier will focus on leisure destinations in the United States and Caribbean and some routes in Europe.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

RIM. Rogers taking orders for 'all-touch' BB10 devices

Rogers Communications said Monday its current wireless customers are now able to place orders for BlackBerry 10 devices.

The new BlackBerry 10 devices on offer will be "all-touch" and won't have the physical keyboard that BlackBerry users are used to typing on. But Rogers won't be providing details on pricing, availability or specifications until early in the new year.

Research In Motion has previously said an "all-touch" version of its new phones would be released first, followed by a model with a physical keyboard shortly afterward.

RIM announced separately that it's giving an invitation-only preview of the BlackBerry 10 to more an 120 select government and private-sector customers in a variety of industries. The two announcements are part of efforts to build interest in a new generation of BlackBerrys in hopes of reviving the Canadian technology company. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Missing women report. Police bias let Pickton keep killing: Inquiry

Bias against the poor, aboriginal, drug-addicted sex workers in Vancouver's troubled Downtown Eastside led to a series of failures that allowed serial killer Robert Pickton to hunt unimpeded by police for years, a public inquiry has found.

Commissioner Wally Oppal's 1,448-page report, released Monday, chronicles years of mistakes that allowed Pickton to lure dozens of women to his farm in Port Coquitlam, B.C., with little interference from police and even less concern from the public.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Robert Pickton THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Prescription drugs

Stimulants not meant for the healthy: Journal

An article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal says doctors should consider refusing requests by healthy patients for cognitive-enhancement drugs like those used to treat attention deficit disorder. The co-author says there is little evidence that the medications benefit healthy people and their side-effects may cause harm.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Berlusconi sex-for-hire

Key witness in sex scandal trial fined

A Milan court fined a woman at the centre of Silvio Berlusconi's sex-for-hire scandal 500 euros ($650) on Monday for failing to appear as a witness twice at the former premier's trial.

Karima el-Mahroug is the last witness to be called in the trial that accuses Berlusconi of having paid for sex with el-Mahroug when she was 17, and then trying to cover it up. Berlusconi revealed he is engaged to 28-year-old Francesca Pascale. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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IT'S ACTUALLY NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

SHE SAYS...
Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

Do you have all of your affairs in order? Have you told all of your friends and family just how much you love them? Because if the fear-mongers are to be believed, we only have a few days left to say our goodbyes before an apocalyptic end-of-days descends upon us all on Dec. 21.

A fate foretold by hieroglyphs and perpetuated by a terrible John Cusack disaster movie, the Mayan doomsday prophesy represents the end of the Mesoamerican Long Count calendar. This so-called Day of Reckoning will bring about something (although no one is quite sure what exactly) that will mean the end the world as we know it.

Prepping for reality

And yet, despite all the evidence to the contrary (you know, science), people around the world are very into this faux-pocalypse.

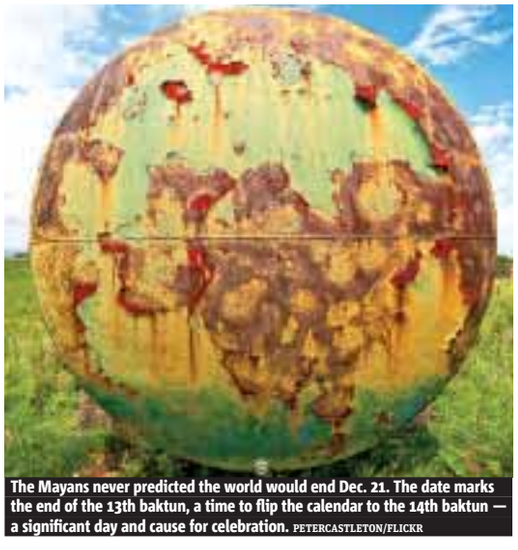
But before you get too nervous about solar flares, catastrophic floods and swarms of killer bees, just stop. NASA went and debunked the whole thing by releasing a video entitled Why the World Didn't End Yesterday, a whole 10 days ahead of schedule. Their official statement is something along the lines of: "Our planet has been getting along just fine for more than four billion years so everybody just relax, OK."

And yet, despite all the evidence to the contrary (you know, science), people around the world are very into this faux-pocalypse. Alarmist bloggers are convincing people to hunker down with canned goods while New Age visionaries are purchasing one-way plane tickets to a remote village in Turkey renowned for its protective energies. And then there's that Chinese farmer who is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars building an ark as a precautionary measure — AN ARK!

I'm tempted to join in on the fun: host a doomsday pity party for myself and listen to Britney Spears' Till the World Ends on repeat while drowning my sorrows in a pint of Häagen-Dazs Mayan Chocolate ice cream. But rationally, we all know that we've got nothing to worry about; we're still buying Christmas presents and making plans for New Year's Eve. I'm actually inclined to think that the whole thing might just be a way for companies to cash in on tasteless apocalypse-blowout-sales and end-of-the-world-themed merchandise.

So even though I love a good conspiracy theory, I think I'll side with our modern-day scientists over an ancient civilization and their 5,125-year-old calendar. However, if your Judgement Day predictions involve a sexy astronaut version of Ben Affleck saving us all from a rogue asteroid, you definitely have my attention.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays



The Mayans never predicted the world would end Dec. 21. The date marks the end of the 13th baktun, a time to flip the calendar to the 14th baktun — a significant day and cause for celebration. PETERCASTLETON/FLICKR

Do you do takeout?

SOLENT

Culinary world record

World's largest pizza gets served

Five Italian chefs have set a new record for the world's largest pizza, which is a staggering 40 metres in diameter — the length of nearly three buses.

Such was the size of the massive margherita that the chefs in Rome had to bake the dough in 5,234 separate batches over a 48-hour period.

The gargantuan food item is made gluten-free in order to raise awareness about celiac disease, the most frequent food intolerance worldwide.

METRO

What's in a name

"We named the pizza Ottavia (after Roman Emperor Octavian Augustus Caesar) to symbolize the hope of a great economic and cultural revival."

Dovilio Nardi, head of the Italian chef quintet

Too cheesy?

- 8,981 kilograms of gluten-free flour, mixed with 11,274 litres of water
- 4,535 kilograms of tomato sauce
- 675 kilograms of margarine
- 250 kilograms of salt: over 40,000 times an adult's recommended daily allowance
- 3,991 kilograms of cheese
- 100 kilograms of lettuce
- 25 kilograms of balsamic vinegar
- 1,354 litres of yeast

Extra, extra large

23,224

kilograms is the total weight of this prodigious pizza. The colossal size is the same as more than 68,300 regular frozen pizzas put together.
The team broke the previous record, set in 1990 by Norwood Pick 'n Pay hypermarket in South Africa. The former record holder's pizza was made of gluten and measured 37 metres.

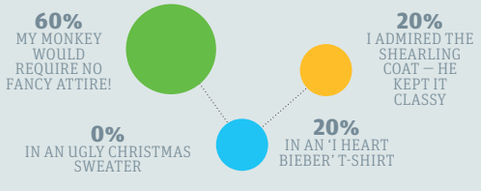
Online

For more of Metro's voices, visit metronews.ca.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

If you had been the owner of the Ikea monkey, how would you have dressed it for its international debut?


60%
MY MONKEY WOULD REQUIRE NO FANCY ATTIRE!
20%
I ADMIRED THE SHEARLING COAT — HE KEPT IT CLASSY
0%
IN AN UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATER
20%
IN AN 'I HEART BIEBER' T-SHIRT

Twitter

@BrknBones: Busy Weekend is Finally Finished. Time to catch up on some #Dexter .

@melissayee: So I shouldn't bother making plans for this weekend since the world is suppose to end on Friday??

@jaewall: I couldn't live my life without making 7 lists a day.

@bryenatkins93: read over all my tweets in the past 4 months and it brought back so many first semester memories! #fanshawe #college

@Natasha_Bd: opening the present my mom sent at 6 am as a study break? hello worst birthday ever. Thanks #westernu for the two exams today!

@ForestCityRaces: Give your family and friends a little tighter hug today.

metro
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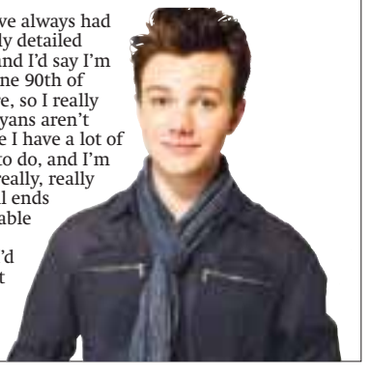
With Dec. 21 fast approaching, we ask a few celebs what they might do if they were faced with the end of the world

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

CELEBRITY BUCKET LISTS

Chris Colfer (Glee)



You know, I've always had a really, really detailed bucket list, and I'd say I'm only about one 90th of the way there, so I really hope the Mayans aren't right because I have a lot of stuff I want to do, and I'm going to be really, really pissed if it all ends and I'm not able to. If I had a month left, I'd probably just go on a very expensive vacation.

Joel McHale (Community)

An end of the world bucket list? Yes. A really sturdy bucket.

Maggie Grace (Taken 2)

Honestly, one of my sort of bucket list items I just ticked off. I did a Broadway play for the first time. It was terrifying. But it's something I've wanted to do since I was 11 years old. So I at least checked one off.

Jake Abel (The Host)

If I knew the world was going to end, I would skydive, which is something that normal people do, but it would take the end of the earth for me. But without a parachute. I would just jump out of an airplane.

Teresa Palmer (Warm Bodies)

Oh gosh, end of the world bucket list? Yeah, I would've liked to have had a baby before the end of the world, but there's not really time for that. I'm not sure what I'm going to do. I want to jump out of a plane, for sure. I would just eat so much food, 24/7 just eat and eat and eat. Travel around the world, eating from all different cultures. That'd be amazing.

Kellan Lutz (The Twilight Saga)

No, I don't (have one), because I don't believe the world's going to come to an end. God never gave a date so I don't believe it's going to happen. So there's no need for me to make a plan B with all that. I'm just living my life every day to the fullest.

Week of Armageddon

Check out Metro all week for more stories of apocalyptic proportions.

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

The big ol' babies of 2012

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

The past few days have been rough for everyone, so I'm going to dedicate today's column to some of the biggest celebrity babies who made their appearance this year. That's right: lots and lots of adorable babies!

Who: Blue Ivy Carter
Parents: Jay-Z and Beyoncé
Given the media attention surrounding the birth of Blue Ivy, it's pretty surprising the world didn't tip off its axis when she came into the world on Jan. 7.

Who: Samuel Affleck
Parents: Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck
The movie-star duo welcomed their first son on Feb. 27. Not much is known about baby Sam, other than he'll probably be ridiculously good looking and talented.

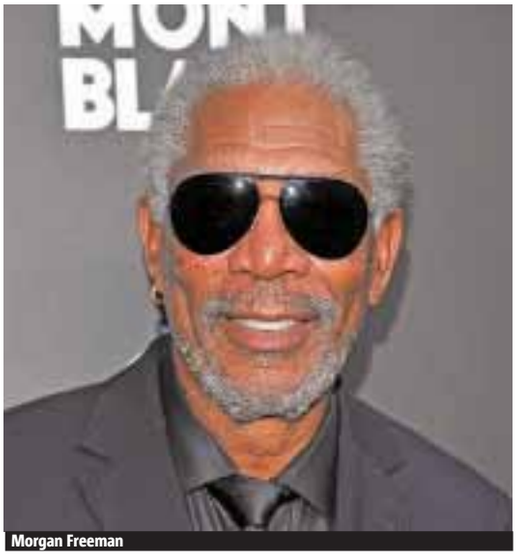
Who: Maxwell Johnson
Parents: Jessica Simpson and Eric Johnson
After following the longest pregnancy known to man, Simpson finally birthed baby Maxi on May 1. And now she's allegedly pregnant again. That, or maybe she's just constantly gestating.

Who: Jack Pratt
Parents: Anna Farris and Chris Pratt
Not a lot of fanfare was made about baby Jack's somewhat premature appearance on Aug. 25. Instead of gracing any magazine covers to showboat the news, new dad Chris Pratt Tweeted this message to his followers, "It's a boy! Thanks for all your kind words. In lieu of gifts we ask that you mouth kiss a stranger."

Who: Edward Duke Rancic
Parents: Bill and Giuliana Rancic
After years of unsuccessful IVF treatments and a miscarriage and then a breast cancer diagnosis, the Rancic family finally had a bit of good news: Their baby Edward Duke was born via a gestational carrier on Aug. 29.

Who: Tennessee Toth
Parents: Reese Witherspoon and Jim Toth
The baby, whose name still sounds like a brand of whiskey to me, was born on Sept. 27.

Blue Ivy Carter HELLOBLUEIVYCARTER.TUMBLR.COM



Morgan Freeman

Newtown tragedy: Freeman didn't comment

Not so fast, Facebook users. A lengthy quote attributed to Morgan Freeman in the wake of the Newtown, Conn., elementary school shooting tragedy has been making the rounds on the social networking site, suggesting media coverage encouraged the shooter. The only problem is those aren't Freeman's words. "Morgan neither made statements or posted those statements. We are trying to find out who did, but they did not originate from him," a source for the actor tells E! News.

Twitter

@HackedOffHugh
Taking gooner nephew to Emirates. Thanks to all Walcotts. Will try not to start ruck.

@ZacharyQuinto
lately been feeling like the disgruntled child of divorced parents twitter and instagram. pull it together you guys. this is embarrassing.

@EmmaBunton
So many people running on the streets of London, that's it im gonna get fit,,,,,,,, after Christmas!!!

@Joan_Rivers
I love celebrity Christmas carols. in Jessica Simpson's house they'll stand around the piano singing, "I Saw Daddy Kissing Santa Claus."

Jason Trawick and Britney Spears

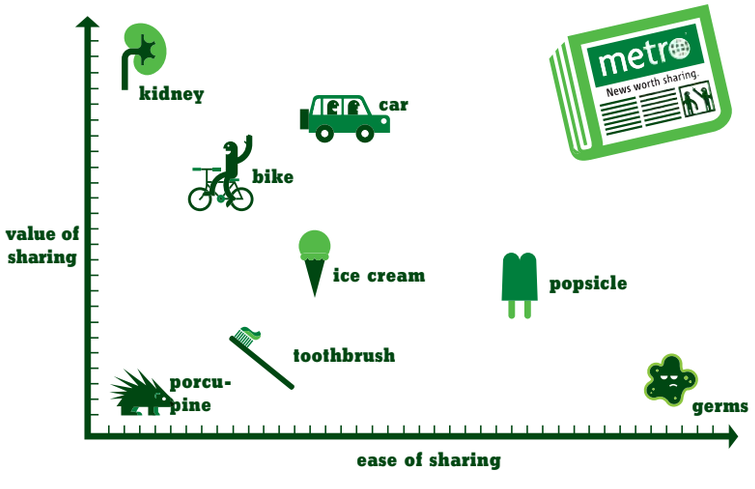
Oops! I did it again? Break up talk circulates for Britney and beau

Britney Spears' relationship with Jason Trawick may be about to end, though the X Factor host and pop star is apparently the last to know, according to Hollyscoop.

"Jason has told Britney's entire family that he's planning to leave her so Britney will have a support system when he breaks the bad news," a source says of the couple, who are reportedly spending the holidays apart. Trawick is said to be waiting until Spears' work on the current season of the X Factor is wrapped before dumping her.

Matt Damon sets it straight

Matt Damon has been dodging gay rumours ever since he and best friend Ben Affleck burst on the scene with Good Will Hunting, but he's avoided acknowledging them — until now. "I never denied those rumours because I was offended and didn't want to offend my friends who were gay — as if being gay were some kind of f–ing disease," he tells Playboy magazine. "It put me in a weird position in that sense. The whole thing was just gross."



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Last minute holiday health

Fitness. Celebrity trainer Ashley Borden has a Christmas gift for you: expert tips to avoid temptation

ROMINA McGUINNESS
life@metronews.ca

What was the point of kicking yourself into shape last January if you're going to let all your efforts go to waste in the last two weeks of the year?

"You should absolutely indulge during the holidays because if you restrict yourself, you'll only feel deprived and frustrated," Ashley Borden, who trains celebrities including Ryan Gosling, Christina Aguilera and Ke$ha, tells Metro. "The problem is that people tend to adopt an 'all or nothing' attitude and as a result, their fitness and diet completely goes out of the window."

Here's what she'd do in certain situations.

Scenario 1: There is no way I can ditch my family so I can go off and do some exercise.

"I don't believe that because you're with your family, you can't take the time out to workout," says Borden.

"Why would you turn off your life and drop the things that are actually helping you feel good? Many people find dealing with the full family dynamic both stressful and emotional — making it even more important that you set aside an hour or so each day of 'me' time where you can let off some steam.

"It may seem a little selfish, but don't care."

TIP: Focusing on yourself will make you a more productive family member because you'll feel less resentful for being locked in the house stuffing the turkey and chopping up carrots.

Scenario 2: The holidays are about switching off. I don't want to stick to a schedule.

"Normally, people find it easy to stay on track because they follow a set routine. They get up, cycle to work, have breakfast and so on," says Borden. "But during the holidays, because there isn't the same schedule and structure, diet and fitness habits can become very erratic. The assumption is that once it's all over, losing the extra weight and bloat will be easy when deep down we all know we're going to struggle. The key is to not schedule in exercise. Make loose but firm plans — book a spinning class or stock up on fruit and vegetables so you have something to snack on."

TIP: Wake up without an alarm. Have some breakfast before you do a quick 30 minute cardio workout. Once you've done that, you can relax for the rest of the day.

Scenario 3: Festive food is my favourite. I'm going to starve myself all day just so I can stuff my face at dinnertime.

Don't get sucked into the Santarexic habits this month. THINKSTOCK

"Never assume that it's OK to skip meals during the day in order to lash out at Christmas dinner. This kind of behaviour will really screw up your eating patterns," warns Borden.

"Your body can't assimilate and metabolize all these calories at once and that's how you end up gaining weight. It's much easier to eat a normal dinner and allow yourself a bit of indulgence. One slice of cake won't make or break your body."

TIP: On days when you know you're likely to over-eat, try and break a sweat for at least 20 minutes.

Scenario 4: It's impossible to workout in my hotel.

"If you're really stuck at your in-laws in the middle of nowhere, you always have your body weight to use.

Set up a mini circuit in your room — even if you have very little space, you can train for around 30 minutes by doing reverse lunges, planks or pushups.

If you want to do some cardio, pack a jump rope."

TIP: Invest in some resistance bands with handles. And, again, pack a jump rope in your luggage.

Tips to a stress-free holiday

December should be a month of indulgence and happiness — then why is it always a time of conflict and drama? Laura Oates, behavioural psychologist at Harley Therapy in England, tells us how to avoid a mental breakdown.

Sorry, Christmas is not a Kodak moment

"We're expected to believe that as if by magic, we're all going to get on famously. We all wish we had a loving family that peacefully opened their presents on Christmas day, but in reality, you all wake up late, moody and hung over. Make the best of what you've got and you won't feel so cheated. If things go horribly wrong — well it only lasts a few days."

Have an attitude of gratitude

"The holidays can be a time of forced bonding and jollity, but rather than dwell on all the bad stuff, think about what you're thankful for. Yes, you might feel like punching Auntie Phyllis by the time she's had her third whisky, but if you remind (yourself) that you only have to spend one day a year with her — you'll have more patience."

Pretend you're still at work

"What makes you more effective at work can help you save time and beat stress at home. Time management skills: Salami slicing is time consuming, so do that first. Think of present buying as you would a big project — you'd never leave it to the very last minute. And if your sister is spoiled and a bully, deal with her assertively."

Don't trash your body

"Put too many demands on your body and what will happen is that you will end up running on adrenalin, which can cause up to 60 per cent of your cognitive powers to be taken away from you. You can lose sleep and concentration — now try planning something. Look after your body and it will look after your mind. Don't expect it to take you to loads and loads of parties."

Go for a nice winter walk. It could change your life. ISTOCK IMAGES

Time to take that healthy nature break

CELIA MILNE
life@metronews.ca

Need a little pick-me-up?

Get up, get out, and head toward the trees.

Nature can have a restorative effect on our health — even in the winter, says Maxine Crawford, a PhD student in psychology at the University of British Columbia.

"Studies show exposure to nature can increase recovery from illness, improve longevity and improve health. As well, exposure to real or virtual nature reduces stress."

Crawford recommends Canadians take nature breaks to recharge batteries during the holidays.

"Bundling up and getting outside to a fairly quiet place surrounded by plants and trees is the best option," she says.

A U.K. study shows exercising outdoors is associated with greater feelings of energy and satisfaction, along with a reduction in tension, confusion, anger and depression.

Other studies have found exposure to nature can lower blood pressure and reduce heart rate. The Japanese have long believed that "forest bathing" has health benefits.

Even looking out at nature can be helpful.

"If the weather is too extreme, sitting by a window that looks out on to a natural setting is the next best thing," says Crawford.

A recent study in Norway found that people who were recovering from illnesses had improved health if they had a view of nature, compared with having a blocked view.

You can always bring nature in. Research indicates that people who have plants in their office are generally less stressed. And plants improve air quality.

The bottom line? Get back in tune with nature.

"Taking the time to move away from televisions and computer screens and spend just five minutes looking outside at the birds in the trees can have an impact on your overall well-being," says Crawford.

Talk with kids about shooting, make them feel safe: Experts

Family. Following the Connecticut shooting, it's best to limit kids' exposure to media

The killings at a Connecticut elementary school left parents struggling to figure out what, if anything, to tell their children.

President Barack Obama said he and his wife, Michelle, would tell their daughters that they love them and hug them a little tighter. Experts say that's a good example to follow. Parents also should allow children to talk about their feelings in the coming days while sheltering them from the 24/7 media coverage of the event, they say.

A man gunned down more than two dozen people Friday, most of them kids at a Newtown, Conn., elementary school. The shooter was among the 28 people left dead, apparently from a self-inflicted wound.

Whitney Finucane wasn't sure how and when she would talk with her son, Nico, about the shooting. She kissed and hugged him when he came out from kindergarten at Dr. Martin Luther King Elementary in Providence, R.I., on Friday.

"I don't know how to explain insanity and evil to a five-year-old," she said. "I don't know that he can really grasp it."

Even the youngest schoolchildren are likely to hear about it, said Glenn Saxe, chairman of the department of child and adolescent psychiatry at NYU Langone Medical Center.

"It's really important, especially at this time, for parents to check in with their kids, to be attuned to how they're feeling, how they're doing and to answer questions honestly and straightforwardly," he said. "For any other kid in school, this has meaning. Parents need to understand that even in surprising ways, this can affect their kids."

Parents can start by asking their children what they've already heard and what questions they have, said Dr. David Schonfeld, a pediatrician and director of the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. If they ask why someone would do something like this, it's OK to say you don't know.

"I wouldn't provide false reassurance or dismiss legitimate concerns," he said. "We don't help children by telling them they shouldn't be afraid of things that are frightening."

Parents can tell their kids, "What is most important is that you're safe and you're going to be safe," said Dr. Louis Kraus, chief of child and adolescent psychiatry at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.

Above all, parents need to try to help their children feel safe, he said. Helping kids return to or maintain normal routines can help minimize their anxiety, Kraus said.

Some children may ask the same questions over and over as a way to seek reassurance, and parents shouldn't dismiss them, said Dr. David Fassler, a child and adolescent psychiatrist in Burlington, Vt.

"Acknowledge and validate the child's thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Let them know that you think their questions and concerns are important and appropriate," he said.

Parents of young children should keep their children from hearing reports on TV, radio and social media and to closely monitor exposure to media for all children, several experts said. Children who show persistent signs of anxiety and stress, including recurring nightmares or sleep problems and fears about leaving home, should see their pediatrician or a mental health expert, Kraus said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's important to know what to tell your children after a tragedy. ISTOCK IMAGES

Safety at school

As students head back to their classrooms on Monday, parents and children should know that school shootings are rare and schools still are among the safest places, said William Lassiter of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence. Parents can ask their principal or parent-teacher group for a copy of their school crisis plan.

Notice whether schools stick to their own security plans, he said. Do people have to check in at the door and sign in at the front office, for example?

"A lot of times, the parents are the ones who need to remind the school," he said.

Velvety chocolate flavour shines in rich cheesecake

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You'll never eat a cheesecake that's so dense and rich tasting, yet so low in fat and calories. The combo of semi-sweet chocolate and cocoa powder gives this cheesecake its velvety chocolate flavour. Garnish it with fresh berries.

It comes in at 259 calories and just 10 grams of fat per serving.

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray 9-inch springform pan with cooking oil.

2. Crust: Combine wafer crumbs, 2 tbsp water and oil in bowl and mix well. Pat onto bottom and slightly up sides of springform pan.

3. Filling: Combine chocolate chips and 2 tbsp water in microwaveable bowl and microwave for 40 seconds. Stir until smooth.

This recipe serves 12. MARK SHAPIRO, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

4. Combine chocolate mix with ricotta and cream cheese, 1 cup sugar, cocoa, egg and 1/2 cup sour cream in bowl of food processor and purée until smooth. Pour over crust. Bake 30 minutes. Centre should still be slightly loose.

5. For topping, mix sour cream and sugar. Carefully spoon over cake. Bake another 10 minutes. Cool on rack, then chill completely before removing the sides of the pan and serving. Top with chocolate wafer crumbs. ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

Ingredients

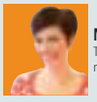
Crust
- 2 cups chocolate wafer crumbs
- 2 tbsp water
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

Cheesecake
- 1/3 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 2 tbsp water
- 1 1/2 cups light smooth ricotta cheese
- 3/4 cup light cream cheese
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup low-fat sour cream
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour

Topping
- 1 1/4 cups low-fat sour cream
- 2 tbsp sugar

Health Solutions

Your holiday cheat sheet



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert, DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Oh, come on, it's the holidays! We both know you are going to eat more than you should, so let's just embrace it. I encourage my private clients to switch to a "nutrient per calorie" model when they are going to cheat. That means that if you can't keep calories low, focus on those items that are loaded with nutrients and use them to enhance your "cheats." Here are three ideas:

1. Cranberry sauce

Assuming it is homemade and not from a can (which likely means more sugar), this condiment is a great way to stretch that brownie/Nanaimo bar/cake you have on your plate. A couple of tablespoons on the side will give you a filling, tart kick of phytonutrients and fibre. The hope is that you can now resist that second slice...

2. Spice it up

Your brain registers intense flavours more actively than bland ones. This means that adding spiciness or low calorie intensity may help you feel satisfied with less food. Think hot sauce, spicy mustard or even horseradish — all will perk up your palate!

3. Fresh herbs

Oh, I know they are often only on the platter for garnish but who says you can't hog garnish? Fresh herbs are full of chlorophyll and tummy soothing nutrients that may replace the extra space on your plate that you are tempted to fill with mashed potatoes.

THERESA ALBERT IS AN AUTHOR AND ON CALL, PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Treat. Chocolate Espresso Bread Pudding

1. Butter a 13 x 9-inch (3 l) glass baking dish and set aside.

2. In saucepan, combine chocolate, 2 cups (500 ml) of cream, sugar, espresso and butter and melt over medium-low heat, stirring, until everything is smooth. Remove from heat.

3. Meanwhile, place slices of bread on cutting board and cut off crusts. Cut each slice diagonally into 4 triangles. Set aside.

Ingredients
- 6 oz (170 g) dark chocolate (70% cocoa solids), chopped
- 3 cups (750 ml) 35% whipping cream, divided
- 3/4 cup (175 ml) sugar
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) freshly brewed espresso
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) butter, cut into cubes
- 12 slices (1/2-inch/1 cm thick) day-old egg bread
- 4 eggs

4. In bowl, whisk eggs until blended. Gradually pour in chocolate mix in a thin stream, whisking to combine. Spoon a 1/2 inch (1 cm) layer of chocolate mix over bottom of prepared dish. Place half bread triangles over chocolate, overlapping slightly. Pour half of remaining chocolate mix over bread; cover with remaining bread in same pattern as before. Pour remaining chocolate mix over top. Press bread down with fork to allow mix to coat bread. Allow dish to cool 10 mins. then cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 24 hours.

5. To serve, preheat oven to 350 F (180 C). Remove plastic wrap from dish and bake 45 mins. or until top is crunchy and pudding is set but pudding-like in the centre. Let cool for at least 10 minutes.

6. In a chilled bowl, whip remaining cream and serve with warm pudding.

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Games to raise your money IQ

Alison on Money.
Website's game, called Cranial Cash Clash, helps teach you money skills

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

It's not too late to raise your holiday money IQ! If you're feeling a little overwhelmed as the big day draws near, there's nothing like a game to improve your outlook.

The Investor Education Fund (getsmarteraboutmoney.ca) has created Cranial Cash Clash, a series of interactive games to teach money skills. The latest, Gift Thrift, offers tips about holiday spending, the use of credit cards and related topics such as credit ratings. You may find that a couple of the questions have fairly obvious answers, but they do get you thinking.

On the other hand, there are many you likely don't know.

Try this one: If you decide to give a gift to your favourite charity or charities, does the amount you give affect the tax credit you receive?

Which is right?

A. No. As long as they are accredited charities, the benefit to you is the same.

B. Yes, but there may be restrictions for out-of-province charities.

C. Yes, the tax credit goes up if you give more than $200.

D. No, it's a 15 per cent credit no matter how much you give.

The answer is C.

Gift Thrift can be played via Facebook with friends or family members. The Leaderboard lets you log in and keep track of scores as you go. There are eight other Cranial Cash Clash games dealing with everything from investing to financial scams and debt. The questions are randomized so you can't practice the answers for a certain win.

Bonus points are awarded when you answer within a certain time. If you flub, as I did on a question about credit scores (my finger slipped, really!), you can input your email address at the end of the game to receive information about that subject area. You'll also see a link to a more detailed explanation.

Though not designed for youth, the series is also a great way to get teens and young adults thinking and talking about money issues. They won't be familiar with many of the topics, but the questions will stimulate discussion.

Cranial Cash Clash is a nice break from holiday shopping.

Contact Alison at griffiths.alison@gmail.com or alisongriffiths.ca

Pop quiz

What is the interest free grace period on credit cards?

- **A.** There isn't one
- **B.** 30 days
- **C.** 14 days
- **D.** 21 days

• Answer (D)

Christmas presents

Gift buying for awkward people

FUN AND FRUGAL
Lesley Scorgie
money@metronews.ca

It can be tough to find an appropriate gift for every person in your life. ISTOCK IMAGES

So your dad has a new girlfriend and you're still warming up to her. Sure, she seems nice enough, but without knowing much about her personal tastes, what should you buy her for the holidays when your budget is already tight?

We've all been faced with the "what to buy for the awkward person in your life" dilemma. You don't want to waste your money or offend your boss, co-worker, a not-too-close friend, or someone your friend or family member is dating. You may even want to impress the person with something useful or miraculously thoughtful.

Before you hit up the mall for the latest infomercial gadget, understand the relationship of the person to you and what they mean to you today and in the future. If you and your brother-in-law are off to a rocky start, you may want to extend a thoughtful olive branch that could help mend a bridge or two. If it's your boss, watch what you spend so that you don't come off looking like a suck-up, especially if your coworkers find out.

Determine the appropriate price point for the person. Have an open discussion with friends and family members in advance and set limits. This might be an opportune time to introduce the idea of a frugal Secret Santa gift exchange where you're only responsible for buying one gift for one person.

Be resourceful. Investigate what the person would want or need. Listen carefully when in conversation to see if they give away any hints. Ask someone who knows them well what they'd enjoy. Are they a coffee connoisseur or movie buff? If so, perhaps a travel mug, which reduces waste and saves a few pennies at the till, or a gift card to the movies, would be appropriate.

Cash in your loyalty rewards toward the gift so you don't have to dig deeper into your wallet. Better yet, forget buying a gift and make a donation on behalf of your coworkers to a well-known charity.

Overall, stop while you're ahead. You don't need to buy gifts for everyone in your life. This results in overspending or spreading out your budget so thin that you'll end up buying junk for people rather than something useful or thoughtful. If you've got loads of people you'd like to please with presents, try baking or making something small and thoughtful.

A frugal gift of appreciation for that awkward person might go a long way toward making the relationship more pleasant.

But if you really don't like the person, forget a gift and simply save your money.

Follow Lesley on Twitter @LesleyScorgie

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A NEW START IN JANUARY

January is just around the corner, and with it brings a challenge for many people. With frigid temperatures and the added financial stress that often follows the holiday season, many find their overall happiness can be negatively affected. For many, this unhappiness is made worse by the fact they are working in jobs they find unrewarding.

Making the first step towards a new career can seem frightening, especially when you're doing it alone. "We understand what you're going through, and we're ready to help you get to where you want to go," says Don Thibert, president and CEO of Westervelt College.

For more than 127 years, Westervelt College has trained students to be successful in rewarding careers. The college works hard to provide its students with the best career training possible. Its industry-experienced instructors take a hands-on approach to teaching and are committed to seeing their students succeed. Students are not abandoned after graduation, and the career services department is committed to help them secure a career after they graduate. Best of all, most of Westervelt's programs can be completed in less than a year.

While paycheques are certainly nice, most folks only get 24-26 of them each year. Overall satisfaction with your career choice is very important in surviving the other 225 work days of the year. So rather than letting the January blues get you down, take the bull by the horns and explore a career path you will find rewarding.

"With all programs starting in February 2013, there is still plenty of time to start down a new career path," says Wendy Teetzel, director of education at Westervelt College. "I encourage people to come by and see what career opportunities are out there, and how to prepare and achieve their new career goals."

Challenge yourself this winter by starting on the path to a fulfilling career with Westervelt College. You'll be glad you did.

FOLLOWING THE PATH OF LEGENDS

For more than 35 years, Medix School has been providing industry-leading health-care career training for those looking to become medical professionals. Medix School believes in helping students achieve quality education quickly. Every year, hundreds of Medix graduates are added to the Canadian health-care workforce. Medix is the clear choice for those looking to change their life today.

When it comes to medical firsts, London has been a leader for decades — from Dr. Frederick Banting's 1920 discovery of insulin to today's leading edge work in robotic surgery. Medix School London is also following this tradition by providing excellent health-care education.

The London campus is conveniently accessible from London, Sarnia, Tillsonburg, St. Thomas and Strathroy. All classrooms and labs are equipped with state-of-the-art facilities providing an outstanding learning experience for students. The faculty members have both professional and teaching experience that translates into students' effectiveness while working in a real life work environment. The admissions department and career services are focused on guiding the students on how to make the best career choice and live up to the expectations of their employers. These efforts have shown exceptional results in the past few years, as the London campus has registered a high placement rate.

"I came to Medix with a goal in mind," a recent graduate says. "I did my best and never thought I'd feel this accomplished. My instructor was the most amazing teacher I've ever had. I was hired by my externship site and this job is better than I ever dreamed it would be."

For more, contact Medix School at 519-659-4822.

CFL

Austin given keys to Tiger-Cats

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats announced the hiring of Kent Austin to be the club's head coach, general manager and vice-president of football operations on Monday.

Austin won a Grey Cup as the Saskatchewan Roughriders' head coach in 2007. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kent Austin was named the Tiger-Cats' head coach in Hamilton on Monday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Soccer

Fans of Russian team call for all-white, non-gay team

Fans of two-time defending Russian champion Zenit St. Petersburg are calling for non-white and gay players to be excluded from the team.

Supporters' club Landscrona released a manifesto Monday demanding Zenit to field an all-white, heterosexual team. It added "dark-skinned players are all but forced down Zenit's throat" and said gay players were "unworthy of our great city."

Coach Luciano Spalletti said on Zenit's website that "tolerance for me is most of all the ability to understand and accept differences."

"Furthermore, being tolerant means that you fight against any kind of stupidity," he added.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

"It's something that I'm not focusing on, it's in the back of my mind, but I want to accomplish that."

Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson, who is 294 yards away from eclipsing Eric Dickerson's record of 2,105 yards rushing set in 1984 with two games remaining in the season.

Stamkos staying active while away from NHL ice

Lockout. Top sniper trying to 'pick up positives' while awaiting end to labour unrest

The longest hiatus Steven Stamkos has ever taken from high-level hockey is not without its occasional good moments.

There are always plenty of laughs when the NHL star takes the ice for a weekly pickup game with his father Chris and some buddies, a handful of whom are almost three times his age. There is the extra time spent in the gym alongside close friend and mentor Gary Roberts.

And then there is the anticipation of next week's Christmas celebration, the first one he'll get to enjoy at home with family in Markham, Ont., in six or seven years.

"As tough as it is, as frustrating as it is, you try to pick up some positives," said Stamkos.

Quoted

"We feel bad for (the fans), but we're obviously trying to get something done."

Steven Stamkos

But it's clear the NHL's most dangerous scorer is feeling the pain of the lockout. Standing under the sloped roof at the building formerly known as Maple Leaf Gardens on Monday, the locked-out Tampa Bay Lightning forward couldn't help but slip in a few references to his growing displeasure.

"It's frustrating," said Stamkos. "You do something for your whole life and you don't really think anything of it. Everything you do is geared towards playing hockey. Now when you don't have that, it's tough."

The 22-year-old quickly steered the conversation back to a charity game in Toronto on Wednesday night, where he'll captain a team against one led by Montreal Canadiens defenceman P.K. Subban.

He'll get to skate alongside James Neal, Dion Phaneuf, Phil Kessel and Logan Couture, among others, with all of the proceeds from the sold-out Mattamy Athletic Centre benefiting the NHLPA's Goals & Dreams Fund and the RBC Play Hockey program.

"When there's no hockey you try to find other things to do and a great cause to be part of," said Stamkos. "This is one of them."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tampa Bay Lightning sniper Steven Stamkos is keeping busy during the NHL lockout by playing pickup hockey, working out and getting involved in charity games. BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES FILE

State of the lockout

- **Games cancelled.** Players have missed six pay cheques with 526 games cancelled through Dec. 30.
- **State of talks.** Neither side is meeting. The NHL and NHLPA met with federal mediators in New York Dec. 12-13, but then talks ended.
- **Happening now.** All 750 players are deciding whether to give their 30-member executive board the mandate to file what is know as a "disclaimer of interest." A two-thirds majority is needed to take the next step — dissolving their union. The five-day informal electronic vote is being conducted until Thursday.
- **Will it pass?** Think "solidarity" here. There's no way players won't get behind this move. Not giving their board this power basically ends the game with Gary Bettman smiling like the Cheshire Cat from Alice in Wonderland.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Blue Jays officially add Dickey to rotation

R.A. Dickey, the National League's Cy Young award winner in 2012, passed a physical on Monday and signed a two-year extension with the Blue Jays with a club option for the 2016 season. DENIS POROY/GETTY IMAGES FILE

The Toronto Blue Jays officially acquired Cy Young winner R.A. Dickey on Monday evening, adding the 38-year-old knuckleballer to an improved starting rotation.

The New York Mets traded Dickey to Toronto for a package featuring prized young catcher Travis d'Arnaud.

The Blue Jays then signed the pitcher to a two-year contract extension for $29 million US, with a $12-million option for the 2016 season.

Dickey was already signed for $5.25 million next year.

The Blue Jays also acquired catcher Josh Thole and minor-league catcher Mike Mickeas, while the Mets received catcher John Buck, minor-league right-hander Noah Syndergaard and minor-league outfielder Wuilmer Becerra.

Quoted

"Looking forward to a new chapter with the Jays."

R.A. Dickey on Twitter after officially being acquired by the Blue Jays on Monday.

Dickey was 20-6 with a 2.73 ERA last season, capping his rapid rise from the MLB scrap heap to an ace pitcher. He did it by perfecting a way to throw his floater faster than previous knuckleballers.

"Welcome to the Jays," Toronto starter Ricky Romero tweeted. "This pumps me up!!! One goal in mind... Win!!! That's all!!!"

Dickey thanked Mets fans for their backing on Twitter.

"Now that its official, I want to say that I don't have the words to express how grateful I am to you for the steadfast support," Dickey tweeted. "Thank you for making me feel wanted." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
It may be hard to tell fact from fiction today, so don't jump to conclusions. What others say and what others mean are likely to be two different things, so it's essential that you read between the lines.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Attitude is everything, especially on the work front where you need to convince yourself that all things are possible. Your thoughts, more than ever today, will create your reality. Think success and you will be a success.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You would be wise not to make any major decisions or announcements today. You may be bursting to tell the world about what you have done but you will get a much better response if you leave it a while.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You are in danger of making something that is not that important appear bigger than it actually is. Your task today is to focus your mind on something that makes you feel good, something that lifts your spirits to new heights.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Don't be too eager to make changes today because there is a lot you don't know. That applies to all areas of your life but especially to your work and career. Hints and gossip could easily mislead you.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Most of the time, you put logic before emotion but today's aspects warn you could go right the other way and act on feelings alone. Will it pay off? Maybe not, exactly, but no great harm will come of it.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You will get conflicting information from people with different agendas today and there is no way of knowing who is telling the truth. Therefore, you must ignore everything and act only on what your inner voice tells you.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
You are reading too much into a situation that is really quite simple. Not only that, but certain individuals are trying to influence your thinking to make you feel insecure. Don't let it happen. Believe in yourself.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If knowledge is power then it stands to reason that the more knowledge you have about what is going on, the more power you have to influence the outcome. But don't give knowledge away or your power will fade.

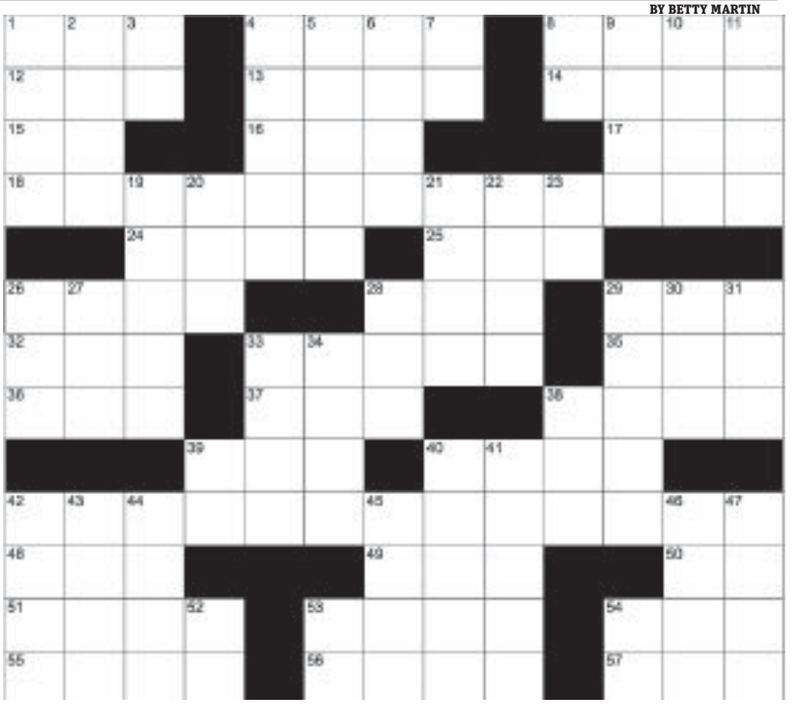
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Someone will go out of their way to make life difficult for you today, but if you stay calm and refuse to react you will do your reputation a power of good. Always behave as if the world is watching you.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You could easily allow yourself to believe that you can do or say anything without repercussion, which is a dangerous attitude to take. Think before you act today. It could save you a lot of trouble.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may think that by supporting certain causes you are doing good in the world but are you truly committed on a personal level? One cause above all oth ers is precious to you — give it your undivided attention. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword

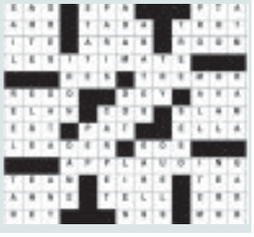
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Soft throw
4. Pull behind
8. Portico
12. French soul
13. Called up
14. TV executive Griffin
15. What Gloria called Edith
16. Invoice abbr.
17. Old model car
18. Rain or snow
24. Part of the eye
25. Tic tac toe win
26. Editing mark
28. Sanford and —
29. Coral reef
32. Summer cooler
33. Parisian school
35. Beer
36. Writing implement
37. Contented sighs
38. Elevator pioneer
39. —: Crime Scene Investigation
40. Rattle
42. Susan Lucci daytime soap (3 words)
48. Island welcome
49. Actor Wallach
50. "—the Right Thing"
51. Work on the street
53. General vicinity
54. Gun the engine
55. Olden sword
56. Workplace ogre, sometimes
57. Found on 39 across (abbr.)

Down
1. Desktop fixture
2. Actor Sharif
3. Who Wants to – a Millionaire?
4. Let the water out
5. Highway exits
6. Hostile
7. "I Will Survive" singer (init.)
8. Size before med. and lg.
9. Actress — Hatcher
10. Black and white cookie
11. Big name in cosmetics
19. Comic DeGeneres
20. So-so grade
21. Hammer or saw
22. First class (2 words)
23. "— Sir, With Love"
26. Drop bait lightly on the water
27. Dutch city
28. Distress call letters
29. Prepare food for a party
30. Living It Up! With — and Jack
31. Affirmative
33. Moderate
34. Elegant
38. This — House
39. She played Katherine Wellington on Harper's Island (init.)
40. Irritates
41. Assumed name
42. Swiss mountains
43. List
44. Inhabit
45. Medal recipient
46. Paradise
47. Star
52. Shoe width
53. Blood type
54. Host of '70s Family Feud (init.)

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle using reasoning and logic.

		8			2			4
9				5				
		5				8	7	
1			2	7				5
3			5		6			9
2				3	1			7
	6	7				2		
				9				8
8			1			5		

Yesterday's Sudoku

18+

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